



## **Department of Planning and Community Development**

### **Build – 04-03**

Section 401.4 of the Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code 2000, requires that localities having 20% and greater moderate and high shrink/swell potential of the jurisdictional land area shall implement an expansive soil test policy.

A review of the 2000 USDA (NRCS) Soil Maps shows that most, if not all, of the soils with high shrink/swell potential in Norfolk are classified as Bohicket muck (soil group #6). Consistent with the soil's description, these soils are found in tidal wetlands in Norfolk's Coastal plain. Development in these areas is regulated by the Norfolk Wetlands Board, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and Virginia Department of Environmental Quality. Typical development structures requested in these areas would include piers, boat ramps and bulkheads, seawalls, and riprap revetments with limited amounts of associated fill.

The construction of residential and/or commercial buildings in wetlands would normally require filling wetland soils and this activity is generally incompatible with local and federal wetlands laws, therefore not permitted.

#### **Summery**

When an application is submitted for building permit, areas identified as wetlands are flagged and referred to the Norfolk Wetlands Bureau for their review, then returned to the Building Construction Services permit counter for building code review. If Building structures , other than piers, bulkheads, and riprap, are appealed to the Board of Zoning appeals, and allowed to be constructed in the areas identified as having shrink/swell soils, then a soil bearing report is required from a Virginia registered Engineer. The foundation and backfill must be designed, sealed and signed by a Virginia registered Engineer prior to plan approval and permit issuance.